

Western Story Number

*The*

# STUDENT WRITER

THE AUTHOR'S TRADE JOURNAL

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No. 4

**Wm. MacLeod Raine**

*Dean of Western Novelists, Writes Optimistically on*

**The Future of Western Fiction**

**Easy Reading--Hard Writing**

*By H. Bedford-Jones*

**Branding Local Color Into Cowboy Yarns**

*By Edwin Hunt Hoover*

**Synthetic Characterization**

*By David Raffelock*

**Why Are Photoplays Rejected?**

*By Frederick Palmer*

**Literary Market Tips**

*Authoritative Information on Magazine Requirements*

*Outlets for Western Material—"The Barrel," from Which  
Anything May Tumble—Prize Contest Report*

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# THE STUDENT WRITER'S Literary Market Tips

Gathered Monthly from Authoritative  
Sources

NEVER, it would seem, has there been a better opportunity than at present for the fiction writer. With the launching of several new all-fiction magazines, and the transforming of several general magazines into all-fiction publications, the trend of the day is distinctly toward this form of literature. *The Metropolitan*, which is the most recent of the general magazines to announce a fiction program, states that the change is made "in obedience to the mood of the times, which demands entertainment far more than serious discussion."

W. M. Clayton, editor of *Telling Tales*, in *The American News Trade Journal*, comments on the changing styles in literature as follows:

"About fifteen years ago there was an enormous development of the special article. Such magazines as *The Metropolitan*, *McClure's*, *The Cosmopolitan*, devoted the larger part of their pages to 'lifting the lid' and non-fictional material.

"What a different situation now. *The Cosmo-*

*politan*, for example, may have a couple of special articles, but its major task is the production of up-to-the-minute fiction. It is the same with all the others in this group.

"Then there is the large and growing class of all-fiction magazines that have developed so rapidly during the past twenty years. Perhaps in the beginning of the wide popular demand for magazines some figured that the public would buy magazines for varying purposes, but as time went on the controlling policy veered back to the production of fiction. They had to do it."

It is interesting to note this month the establishment of several new magazines wholly or partly devoted to radio matters. In addition to these the writer qualified to handle the subject will find many outlets for his work through general magazines, popular science publications, boys' magazines, and the newspapers, a large share of which are taking advantage of the exceptional interest now being manifested by the public in radio.

*Folks and Facts*, 717 Madison Avenue, New York, will make its first appearance in April. "It will pay between \$3.00 and \$10.00 per thousand words on acceptance for literary material, perhaps a better rate for very unusual matter," writes Kathryn W. Hamill of the editorial board. "The magazine desires articles, short-stories, novelettes, editorials, verse, jokes, skits and anecdotes. It is not in the market for serials at the present time. A wide range of subjects may be covered. Mystery and detective stories, Western, love, domestic, and nearly all other themes are allowable in our fiction, the only type not desired being sex stories."

*The Boy's Money Maker*, "The Magazine for the Boy Who Does Things," is a new monthly magazine to be issued by the Eugene Randles Advertising Co., 3 Sherman Street West, Hutchinson, Kan. Eugene Scott Randles, editor, writes: "The magazine will be similar in size to *The Boy's Magazine*. It will appeal to the boy of from 10 to 19, and will contain good, live, thrilling boy stories, jokes, poems, plans for boys to make money, things of current interest to boys, things for the boy to collect. The cover design, which is now in the hands of the engravers, illustrates a boy working with a radio outfit, and we are therefore especially interested in securing a story of two or three parts

in which radio plays the important role. We want fiction of live interest. The theme of the magazine is money making, and of course we will want stories and articles such as will deal with the boy in business. However, we do not want to overdo the theme. The idea of good, live, thrilling reading for the boy should not be neglected. We will pay upon acceptance at rates from ½ cent up, according to our need and the value of the material. Some material will be secured from boy writers who will enter a contest. A board of boy editors will be maintained for the purpose of ascertaining 'the boy interest' in material submitted. After the perusal of the Boy Editorial Board, it will pass into the writer's hands, as well as those of the associate editor, who is a 'boys' man' of prominence. Only clean material is desired. No crook stories will be considered in which the crook wins out. Articles and short-stories should range from 1000 to 1800 words in length. Illustrations are desirable. Only a limited amount of verse, jokes and anecdotes will be used."

*Radio Broadcast* is a new magazine, of the same format and general appearance as *The World's Work*, which will be published for the first time by Doubleday, Page & Company, Long Island, New York, on April 15. The editors write: "We are

in the market for experiences in the use of radio that will interest the radio public, and news items concerning radio not available in the newspapers, also technical articles which possess a high standard of accuracy. We will pay on acceptance. The rates vary as to the kind of material involved, but will be somewhere in the neighborhood of 2 cents a word."

*The Dearborn Independent*, the Ford international weekly, published at Dearborn, Mich., should have received a better rating as a literary market than it was accorded in the "Handy Market List" for March. H. W. Roland, of the editorial department, writes: "For your information, *The Dearborn Independent* pays upon acceptance. We are in the market for informative articles of sufficient importance to interest a circulation of 200,000, distributed in every state. We are desirous of extending our list of worth-while contributors, but the inundation of trash that came from a recent publication in a writer's tip service of our needs makes us despair. Not 1/16 of 1 per cent was worth while. We don't publish verse. Photographs of persons or places appropriate to the subject help to sell us. We average 2 cents a word or better and we don't want to be flooded with correspondence-school graduate efforts."

*Metropolitan Magazine*, 342 Fourth Avenue, New York, with its March issue, begins giving all its space except the editorial page, to fiction. "We will endeavor to lay out our fiction program on a basis which will result in a completely satisfying popular magazine," the editors state. "There will be stories for every member of the family."

*The International Interpreter*, 268 West Fortieth Street, New York, is a new weekly which will appear during the first week in April. It is to be edited by Frederick Dixon, who recently resigned as editor of *The Christian Science Monitor*, and will contain a narrative review of the world's doings, editorials, news from correspondents, articles on important men and women of various countries, reviews, special articles, and one short-story each week.

*Sunset Magazine*, San Francisco, Calif., Charles K. Field editor, writes: "We are in the market for articles of special interest to Westerners. They should be 3000 words or less in length. Short-stories may be from 4000 to 5000 words in length. We are not open at this time for the consideration of serials and do not buy editorials or jokes, skits, or anecdotes. We are glad to examine verse. Stories should be of the out-of-door, love, domestic, or Western types. We avoid sex and horror stories. Payment is on acceptance at from 1 to 2 cents per word."

Clarke Irvine, 201 Lilly Fletcher Bldg., Los Angeles, Calif., writes: "Please help me to get some original jokes or funny stories about screen theatres, patrons, managers, players, and in fact anyone connected with motion pictures. I want some bright, snappy stuff to run in my syndicate column, 'Studioland,' and will pay from \$1 to \$5 for all accepted. No manuscripts returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed stamped envelope."

*Trade Press Publishing Co.*, Montgomery Bldg., Milwaukee, Wis., H. J. Larkin, managing editor, writes: "We have recently taken on two new magazines, the *National Printer-Journalist* and the *Ford Car Trade Journal*. For the *National Printer-Journalist*, we are inviting manuscripts prepared by those who positively know their subjects. We offer an unlimited market for articles dealing with the problems of small newspapers in their editorial, advertising or mechanical departments.

"*Ford Car Trade Journal* will deal with the interests of Ford dealers and garage men. All manuscript must apply directly to the general subject of the Ford trade field."

*MacLean's Magazine*, 153 University Avenue, Toronto, Ont., Canada, F. Vernon McKenzie, editor, writes: "*MacLean's Magazine* has for several years paid promptly on acceptance. Our rates seldom run below 1 cent a word, although for a small proportion of our material we pay as low as 1/2 cent. Men like Leacock and a few others we pay up to 5 and 6 cents a word."

*Fascinating Fiction*, 25 W. Forty-fifth Street, New York, is the new name of *The Follies*. F. M. Osborne, editor, writes: "We are in the market for short-stories of 1500 to 6000 words, novelettes of 10,000 to 15,000 words, and serials of three parts, not over 10,000 words in each part. Melodramatic fiction is preferred, written directly and having action, romance, suspense and an unusual solution or climax. We cannot use sports, Western, small town, college life, or sentimentally domestic fiction. Light and lyrical or humorous verse is desired, and skits—brief prose stuff with an unexpected climax. Payment is on acceptance at 1 cent per word upward."

*Saucy Stories*, 25 W. Forty-fifth Street, New York, edited by F. M. Osborne, also of *Fascinating Fiction*, pays 1 cent a word upward, and is in the market for short-stories of any length and novelettes under 18,000 words. "Sensational and romantic mystery stories are preferred," writes Mr. Osborne. "We do not desire rural, business, domestic (except the triangle situation), or risqué stories. Brief humorous verse and fillers with amusing turns at the conclusion, are wanted."

*Short Stories*, Garden City, L. I., New York, H. E. Maule, editor, writes: "We are in the market for short-stories of from 4000 to 10,000 words, novelettes of from 15,000 to 30,000 words, and serials of from 75,000 to 100,000 words, on adventure, mystery, Western, out-of-doors, sea, humorous, and business themes. We do not desire sex stuff, love stories, or women's stories. Payment is on acceptance at 3/4 cent per word up."

*The Hygienist*, Majestic Bldg., Denver, Colo., is a better-health magazine edited by Dr. R. R. Daniels, who writes: "We occasionally use something in the way of health articles in addition to the material which is prepared by the various doctors of the Daniels Clinical group. Some time ago we had an article by a man in Massachusetts on feet and their treatment, including the sort of shoes and stockings that one should wear. We can use this sort of material occasionally."

(Continued on page 26)

# The Student Writer

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## CONTENTS FOR APRIL

	Page
Literary Market Tips .....	2
Why the Great West Appeals to Story Writers .....	
.....By William MacLeod Raine	5
Branding Local Color Into Yarns of Cowboy Life .....	
.....By Edwin Hunt Hoover	7
Outlets for Western Material .....	
.....By Heather Landon	9
Why Are Photoplays Rejected? .....	
.....By Frederick Palmer	11
Easy Reading—Hard Writing .....	
.....By H. Bedford-Jones	13
The Barrel (Out of Which Anything May Tumble) .....	15
Synthetic Characterization .....	
.....By David Raffelock	17
"Dan Lamont's Dilemma" (Prize Contest Report) .....	21
"Wit-Sharpener" for April .....	24

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## A WESTERN NUMBER

"After reading 'Man-Size' we quadrupled our usual advertising appropriation for a Raine book. The time has come to put Raine over in a big way." This statement was made by Houghton Mifflin Company in announcing William MacLeod Raine's latest novel, out this month. The article which heads our present table of contents will give readers some idea of the breadth of vision and ideals that have placed Mr. Raine in such an enviable light with his publishers.

So many features in the current issue of THE STUDENT WRITER bear directly upon the writing and placing of Western fiction that we have termed it a Western Story number.

## AN INSIDE VIEW

Next month we will have an Arthur Chapman special dealing with the development and interior workings of a great magazine publishing house—the greatest all-fiction market that exists in the world. We refer, of course, to the Street & Smith Corporation. The article will be supplemented by "closeups" of the editors of this group, and an account of the way they handle manuscripts, by an "insider."

## PROF. WALTER B. PITKIN,

head of the Columbia School of Journalism, author of "Writing the Short Story," and acknowledged authority on literary technique, can rarely be induced to write for magazines of authorship. He has consented to break his rule and to write a series of articles especially for THE STUDENT WRITER. The first will appear in the May issue. The subject is "How to Get Story Ideas," and it is unnecessary to recommend it to those acquainted with Professor Pitkin's reputation.

## JOSEPH HERGESHEIMER

declares himself a "damned disagreeable person," because he holds emphatic ideas on story writing which he considers do not permit of argument. An interview with Mr. Hergesheimer has been obtained for STUDENT WRITER readers by Edwin Hunt Hoover, whose article on his own methods appears this month.

For the near future, articles are scheduled by JAMES KNAPP REEVE, veteran editor, publisher, and adviser of literary workers; CHAUNCEY THOMAS, author of "Campfire Talks on Writing," which will be recalled by some of our old subscribers; H. BEDFORD-JONES; FREDERICK PALMER, famous screen writing authority; JULIAN KILMAN, short-story writer; DAVID RAFFELock, critic and technician, and others of equal prominence.

Besides these, Literary Market Tips of superior definiteness, with the "dead wood," or worthless publications, weeded out; "The Barrel," with its informal "get-together" atmosphere, and the monthly prize contest for plot-builders, all contribute to make the magazine indispensable for the literary workshop.



# Why the Great West Appeals to Story Writers

*The Western Novel Is Coming Into Its Own;  
Should Be Measured by Universal  
Standards of Criticism*

By William MacLeod Raine

**I**S the Western novel constructed according to formula? Is it jerry-built, like one of a row of bungalows made to sell? The critics find that fault with it and damn it with no faint dispraise. One after another the new novels of the West appear (an endless flood of them, they say), decked with the old paraphernalia of chaps, six-guns, bad grammar, and dreadful humor. Is this a true indictment?

It is, and it isn't. There are too many formula-built Western stories, but there are many, too, that breathe the very spirit of life.

The West is a favorite setting for stories because it is less trammelled than the East, because it has been the scene of a wonderful and amazing national adventure, and because it is easier to write about as the home of romance.

The winning of the West is a theme to stir the blood. From the days when the Argonauts sailed in clipper ships around the Horn or tramped across the fever-swept Isthmus, it has always called to the adventurous. They came in the spirit of high and carefree hope—the lusty, the strong, the rebellious, those in whom the hot and rapid blood of youth sang most loudly. They crossed untrodden plains, plowed unfurrowed fields, gutted mountains, built in the desert cities amazing and wonderful, that sprang up like mushrooms. They laughed and sang and played and worked and died with the dream still in their hearts.

**W**HEN Sinclair Lewis says that Main Street may be found from Maine to San Diego I challenge that statement. The note of the West is freedom. From every

corner of the earth the restless, the adventurous, the dissatisfied have come. They have brought with them culture or ignorance, as the case may be, but always a saving percentage have brought the valor of high hope that protects from the bromidic and the sense of humor that permits them to laugh at themselves.

"Main Street," even as a picture of the flat Mississippi country, is true only superficially. Every one of the Main Streeters is a wonderful bit of life's protoplasm. Joyce Kilmer's insight is more true when in his song of the servant girl and the grocer's boy he writes:

Her lip's remark was, "Oh you kid."  
Her soul spoke thus (I know it did):

O king of realms of endless joy,  
My own, my golden grocer's boy.

I am a princess forced to dwell  
Within a lonely kitchen cell,

While you go dashing through the land  
With loveliness on every hand.

**I**T is not only because the West has been the scene of such a tremendous trek of the races that writers choose it for a theme. Society here is less stratified, simpler, not so sophisticated. Second-class writers find it easier to depict what they suppose the West to be like than to write of the East. Fewer of their readers know whether they are or are not reflecting life. The theme can be treated in a conventional way, according to the tradition that has been built up about it, and the errors and superficialities are not so likely to be detected.

But what a rich gallery of stories we have of the West. There is nothing jerry-

built about Wister's "The Virginian," about Stewart Edward White's "Arizona Nights," about Caroline Lockhart's "The Lady Doc." Nothing could be truer than Pattullo's "The Sheriff of Badger." Eugene Manlove Rhodes's Jeff Bransford is a just portrait of the cattleman beyond question of doubt. Peter Kyne and Kennett Harris have done stories of plainsmen that are inimitable.

Or if you want the other side of the old West, let me mention Willa Cather's "My Antonia," the story of the development of a Bohemian immigrant girl in Nebraska. Here again is the very breath of life—a true and just picture of the immigrants' sordid poverty, of the ferment of the yeast in the girl's soul as it struggles to express itself, of early days on the plains as they affected American families. Faith, hope, joy, sorrow, meanness, love—we have them all here.

Or to come more closely home, there is "A Tenderfoot Bride," written by Clarice E. Richards, a true, vivid, and colorful story of ranch life within sight of Pikes Peak, with a play of humor that is delightful.

**T**HE new West is coming to its own. Oil, irrigation, mining, farming, labor conditions, all play their part as a background of the work that is being done.

This work must be judged by the same standard of criticism that applies to the novel and the short-story dealing with New York, Paris, or London. Fiction is a personal impression of life. It must hold up the mirror to life—to a life that has been selected, classified, and dramatized to meet the ends of the writer. If a novel of

the West shows close observation, insight, the vigor of conviction; if it has style and clarity and a sense of proportion; if it characterizes clearly and suggests the presence of background, it is as valuable a contribution to the day's literature as one set in Vienna or Boston.

I recur to my statement that a novel is a personal impression of life. It must be that, whatever else it is. It must have personality, and to possess this it must express the author. If he has a commonplace mind the expression of it will be flat. The product of a rich mind will be suggestive, worth while, stimulating. That of a poor one will necessarily be arid.

Apply this principle to the matter of observation, for instance. Dickens, it is said, could go up and down a street once and from memory tell what each store was, with the names of the firms doing business in the different shops. This seems to me useless knowledge. Observation must be touched with insight. Its expression in fiction must be significant. A huddled teddy bear on a porch, one arm gone and sawdust trickling from its wounded side, may or may not be worth mentioning. If the baby fingers that flung the doll there have since become stilled in death that doll has perhaps become charged with meaning.

In fiction, to sum up what I mean, a work must be a true and just reflection of the warp and woof of life. It must mirror this with art, choosing and rejecting skillfully, often by suggestion and by reticences. The setting of a bit of literature is immaterial. The question to be decided is whether it is a valid and vital document in its day and generation.

**D**O YOU believe that editors want only "one formula" stories—that the best way to succeed in writing is to stifle originality and deliberately commercialize? In a most unusual article, combining personal confession with sane argument, Julian Kilman, an author whose work has appeared in magazines ranging from *Snappy Stories* to *The Atlantic Monthly*, lays down a unique rule for success. The article is sure to arouse a storm of comment. It will appear soon in *THE STUDENT WRITER*.

# Branding Local Color Into Yarns of Cowboy Life

*Know Your Characters, Then Imagine Them Placed in Dramatic Situations; the Result Is "Human Interest"*

By Edwin Hunt Hoover

*Creator of "Dutch" and "Blue," Author of "Why Cowboys Leave Home," "Too Frail to Fight," and Many Other Stories*

THE answer to the question: "How do I write Western stories?" is: "On the typewriter." This gives rise to the pun-gent suspicion that they are "machine made." Such suspicion would be the grossest flattery to my prosaic imagination. All I have written thus far has its foundation in the life, action and conversation of New Mexico ranches, cow-camps and other gathering places of Sons of the Saddle. The truth is that my Spencerian tracks can't even be deciphered by a code.

The "why" of my Western stories would be easier to write about. I *think*, most readily, in the "local color" of the Southwest. And I've learned that the things that get a laugh out of me are also apt to cause an editor to chuckle. It's the same way with thrills. Quite accidentally I discovered *why* I was able to pass on the laughs and thrills: The high lights of humor and drama were interesting to me because I *knew* the characters. The stories were acceptable because when the editor had read them he felt that *he knew them too*. "Characterization" he called it. I've found that I can think up reams of plots which refuse to build themselves into stories because my characters are strangers to me. Consequently they don't interest me—or anyone else.

You know how it is; when you're *telling* a crowd of friends about some incident you say: "Remember how So-and-So was always scared to death that his wife would find out about Such-and-Such? Well—" That's how you tell it. Your auditors *know* So-and-So and are keenly interested in his doings; whereas, if he was a rather colorless stranger, you'd have to feed 'em home brew to make 'em stay hitched till

you finished. And more than that, you'd have to take a drink yourself to keep from being bored. *You* wouldn't have any interest in the story.

Perhaps a dissection of "At Rodeo Time"—which the editor and I read with some interest—will illustrate the "how" of my Western stories. (My wife also read it.)

Weiser, Wagon Boss of a big cattle outfit—and incidentally a husband and the father of two children—is threatened with death by Black, who is to supersede him as Range Foreman. (This is as Weiser told it to me.) Weiser knows that Black has been imported by unfriendly interests to kill him. Black is unarmed but rushes across the corral toward the adobe bunkhouse in quest of six-shooter. Weiser knows that Black, once inside the bunkhouse, will have all the advantage. Shall he or sha'n't he let Black get to the bunkhouse? His two youngsters, peering through the corral gate, decide for him. He knows that they will be orphans in about two minutes if Black steps inside the bunkhouse door. Weiser commands Black to halt; Black continues on his course and is shot—through the back; the bullet penetrates his heart.

Weiser went "on the dodge" until bail could be arranged, and his wife kept him supplied with food and fresh mounts till he was ready to give himself up. She was able to do this through the co-operation of friends who knew that Weiser had good reason for acting as he did. He was acquitted on the testimony of a "dummy," a voiceless tramp hired by Weiser a short time before, to do chores about the place, who had been a witness to the shooting.

THAT, roughly, is the way it happened in real life. Most of the characters were handed to me on a silver platter—or rather *over* a frying pan full of beef; also the plot. But when I came to write the story, years later, it looked like a “dud.” No man who shot an unarmed enemy in the back would ever “get by” as a “hero.” Therefore I put a six-shooter in the hand of Black when he made the threat, and Weiser disarmed him with his fists. He threw the pistol to the other side of the corral in order to give himself time to reach his Winchester in a saddle scabbard, and the duel began when Black recovered his Colt. A shot in the shoulder whirled Black; another bullet, shot as Black was in the act of whirling, found his heart—through the back. Retaining the “shot in the back” idea added a complication that “Dummy Mike” cleared up by his dramatic acting in the courtroom scene.

I further took liberties with the original story by causing Weiser to be a bachelor, with a sweetheart who stood by him throughout his troubles. It seemed to me that a touch of romance would add zest to the interest in my dashing young hero—dashing, principally, away from posses. All I had to do in that respect was to picture Mrs. Weiser ten years younger and engaged, instead of married, to Weiser; place her on her father's ranch and have her act as she would naturally have acted in the circumstances.

In “real life” the “villain” who engineered the frame-up on Weiser was never punished. In the written version, however, Justice gives three rousing cheers and leads that gentleman and two associates to jail—one cheer for each prisoner. In the final development of the story, it appears that “Dummy Mike,” and not Weiser, fired the fatal shot, thus clearing Weiser of any possible stigma.

I don't know where I got Hanselmeier, the lawyer, in that story. An attorney was needed to help my hero out of his jackpot and I “discovered” him in Rand, “gracing the bars in Hickok's saloon and Las Palomas courtroom with equal urbanity.” (This occurred in preprohibition times when he could buy a legal drink at a licensed bar whenever he had the price.) He seems to be, according to comment, a more vivid character than Weiser, which is

pretty rough on the theory that “you must know your characters in order to write about them convincingly.” He may be a brain-child, but I give you my word I never saw him until he was full-grown and practicing law.

AS a matter of fact, the writing of Western stories is fundamentally the same, I suppose, as the writing of any other kind of stories. There must be a basic situation, humorous, adventurous, or amorous; the characterization must be consistent with the situation; the conflict must give the characters a chance to act comically, heroically, or lovely; the climax must see them laughing, victorious or married. That last is a bit weak; can't we have it “laughing, victorious *and* married?” No? Well, all right. It also seems to be very helpful to a story to have a villain who laughs in the first few chapters and is flabbergasted at the conclusion.

As a man thinks, so does he. When I see something of interest, I visualize it in the “local color” of the Southwest. When someone curries me with a caustic remark, I wonder: “What sort of comeback would Johnny Blank or Tom Dash have for that?” and think of it several hours later, as is customary with my repartee. Perhaps the situation or comment reminds me of something that happened in New Mexico or suggests something that *might* happen there—and if it does, the old typewriter is doomed to another session of hard hitting.

THE monotony of this spring weather in the lap of winter—or something—reminds me of one of the waddies who came into camp one evening, soaked, weary, bruised. He remarked:

“This is a sorry life, nothin' ever happens. Same thing every day. Y'u ride out after cows; y'u see one with a calf that needs brandin'; y'u chase her; y'ur pony forks a tree an' y'u git piled. Y'u try t' ford th' Rio an' y'ur horse bogs; it takes half a hour to tromp him loose an' y'u both git darn near drowned. Y'u fall in behind a coyote with designs on ropin' him an' y'ur mount steps in a prairie-dog hole an' turns a wildcat. Y'u pull a mangy steer from th' bog an' he runs y'u ragged. An' now a fence-crawlin' bull in th' cornfield needs fairgroundin'.



"Nothin' excitin' occurs, dammit. This monotony is killin' me."

Would there be a story in that? Let the cowboy swap jobs with a Harvey House cook for a week and see what happens!

And does this tell you anything about "How I Write Western Stories"? If it does, tell me. I'd like to know.

## POSTSCRIPT

*Close on the heels of the above contribution from Mr. Hoover, came this illuminating postscript. Possibly it was not intended for publication, but we cannot resist the temptation to include it.*

Dear Mr. Hawkins:

My husband says you want to know how to write Western stories, and as he must put out the furnace and fix the dog, I will tell you how it is done.

First he fills up his best pipe with the tobacco he likes best, then he goes to his den and sits and sits and sits and sits and sits, and I listen for the typewriter to commence working, and it doesn't, so I hike upstairs and say "How is the story coming, old dear?" and he looks thoughtful and says "Pretty good. How do you like this idea?" And then he outlines one of his numerous experiences in New Mexico, and I say "Um—but why don't you write about that little boy who was only six years old and who swore so fluently?" and he says "By jove, that is a good idea!" and I flee.

Then I hear the old typewriter buzzing and after a long time I call up, "Lunch!" and he comes down and eats his yeast and looks over the mail and wonders why the editor rejected "that one," and to whom

he will send it now, and gets quite a bit of inspiration from a check for a short sketch, and then says, "Will you have time to listen to what I've written now?" So I go up to the den with him and he reads the first paragraph, and I say, "What, what—I thought you were going to write about 'So-and-So,' and he says, "Well, I like this better, don't you?" and I say, "Go on," and then I chuckle a little and he pops at me with "What strikes you funny there?" and then he goes on and says, after a time, "Why don't you laugh? That is very funny," and I say, "Is it?"

Well, then I leave him and go do dishes and keep the baby quiet and mess around with the fire and look at the clock, and pretty soon the mailman comes again with more rejections and maybe a check—only, honestly, Mr. Hawkins, we get more checks than we do rejections—and down comes my author man and brings the manuscript with him, and after the mail is read, I hear some more story and it is getting good by now. And then he goes up and finishes it. After that comes dinner and then he says, "You correct it, honey, because my hands are dirty," and I rush up and make what few corrections there are to be made, because authors do transpose letters when their brains go faster than their fingers, and he dresses and we look it over again, and then he rushes for the street-car and to the postoffice and gets it in the 7:30 mail for New York. And thus ends another day.

Hoping you will now be able to write Western stories from my description, I am,

Yours very truly,

MINNIE L. HOOVER..

P. S.—Don't tell my husband I gave you the recipe, for he will never forgive me.

# Outlets for Western Material

By Heather Landon

Recently With the Street & Smith Editorial Staff

ONE of the magazines which offer a wide field to writers of Western fiction is *Western Story*, a Street & Smith publication, edited by F. E. Blackwell. This magazine is made up entirely of Western material and it claims to contain "big, clean stories of the great outdoors."

Prospective contributors should avoid unpleasant sex situations. For instance, if an outlaw kidnaps a girl, he does it to obtain a ransom or for some other reason involving material gain. Ridicule of religion and caste controversies should be shunned like live coals. Nor does *Western Story* want

themes built upon the vast progress of the present West, its commercial success, its motor cars, and other modern improvements. It is known that there are some spots in the West that are not yet entirely civilized—deserts, wild tracts of land where a gold mine might be discovered or a bandit might be lurking, and these offer ideal settings for this kind of fiction.

*Western Story* likes tales depicting the primitive life and experiences of the men of the great outdoors, or progress in an out-of-the-way community; for instance, what the railroad did when it hit Prairie Bend, a settlement on the edge of nowhere. Modernized stories of Indians are in demand. H. Bedford-Jones ran a most exciting series about lost tribes which had been discovered far up in snowbound Canada. Some of them were a most ferocious, treacherous, and scalp-hunting lot, while others were friendly toward a party of explorers. On these circumstances is built a tale of how the tribes were discovered and the dramatic conflict that ensued.

Mr. Blackwell does not want stories that begin "In the good old days of 1850." The time element is studiously left indefinite. Stories available for his magazine must be so written that persons familiar with present conditions in the West will know, without being told in so many words, that they are reading about the West as it was in its "wild and woolly" days. On the other hand, persons who do not know the present West need not be disillusioned. It is not necessary to disturb them in their belief that the picturesque old West still exists just as it is described in the stories they read.

*Western Story* always wants material. It comes out weekly, and the amount of work it consumes is unlimited. Stories of ranch life, sheep and cattle raising, railroad construction, mines, desert life, cowboys, Indians, two-gun men, hoboes, Canadian Mounted Police, dog-teams—all such subjects, if treated as the editor suggests, will be welcomed with open arms. *Western Story* also takes in, as well as the West of the United States, Western Canada and Alaska.

There is only one arbitrary rule. Stories must "get on"; and to do this the only thing that seems necessary is to begin by having somewhere to go, some hill to climb, some mine to discover, some difficulty to overcome. The author must not accomplish things by merely willing them in his clever, intriguing mind; his hero or heroine must be up and doing. In short, stories must be those in which the action is worked out through the efforts of the characters. If the author observes the above suggestions, no matter what length the story is, whether it be six hundred or sixty thousand words, he will be sure to find here a ready and steady market for his material. And what is more, a check will be mailed promptly on acceptance.

Entirely different is the type of Western fiction demanded by A. L. Sessions, editor of *People's Story Magazine*, another Street & Smith publication. Mr. Sessions wants stories of the West as

it exists today. Although the characters can, on adequate provocation, shoot one another, stories of two-gun killers, outlaws, and stick-ups are on the wrong trail when submitted to *People's*. This does not mean that *People's* does not want action stories. It does. But, above all, the thing that appeals to you or me is the direct aim of *People's*; human nature dramatically portrayed in the great outdoors; stories of irrigation, railroad construction, pictures of the ranch life of today, the march and progress of civilization. Also the psychological story with a Western setting will be acceptable to this magazine; for, so far as the editor can gather from the letters he receives from his readers, this type of story is quite as popular as the tale of action.

"Crooked Water," a serial by William H. Hamby, which ran recently in *People's*, elicited many letters of praise because it portrayed the present-day, progressive West.

Mr. Sessions endeavors to give a decision on a manuscript within ten days. Checks are mailed out every Friday. Stories from two thousand to eighty thousand words are desirable.

The special needs of these two publications are given in detail to show the diversity in requirements that exists even among magazines catering to the same demand. Individual requirements will be found, upon study, to mark the many other magazines using a quantity of Western material, among which are the following:

*Adventure*, Spring and Macdougall Streets, New York. This magazine is a fine stickler for realism. Writers who have sold stories to *Adventure* know that their work is not necessarily done after the manuscript has come into the editor's hands. With the acceptance is likely to come back a special form letter which takes up in detail with the author possible changes to be made for the sake of avoiding ambiguities, incongruities, improbable features, and the like. It is almost impossible to get a story past Arthur Sullivan Hoffman, the editor, while it contains even slight deficiencies of fact, characterization, atmosphere, or word choice.

*Short Stories*, Garden City, N. Y., is another Western story market which has its special requirements.

*Argosy All-Story Weekly*, 280 Broadway, New York, is always open to the appeal of rugged stories with scenes laid in the West.

*Sunset*, San Francisco, prefers stories of the modern West, rather than the "wild and woolly" sort.

A full list of magazines which sometimes use Western stories would comprise all the magazines using fiction. However, among markets which are decidedly favorable to Western fiction may be mentioned: *Popular*, *Top Notch*, and *Detective Story*, other Street & Smith publications, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York; *Blue Book*, 36 So. State Street, Chicago; *Ace High*, 799 Broadway, New York; *Action Stories*, 41 Union Square, New York; *Wayside Tales*, 6 No. Michigan Avenue, New York, and *The Open Road*, 248 Boylston Street, Boston, 17.

# Why Are Photoplays Rejected?

*Cost of Production Must Be Weighed by Screen Dramatists  
in These Times of Retrenchment; the Essential  
of Real Drama*

**By Frederick Palmer**

*President of the Palmer Photoplay Corporation, Los Angeles*

A very disconsolate young man called upon me the other day. In one hand he carried a battered manuscript. Almost tearfully he begged me to read it and to tell him why it had been so consistently turned down by producers. "It's the best I can do," he stated. "You've known me for years. You know that I am no tyro. I've sold a hundred or more stories to reputable magazines. I've pounded typewriters in half the newspaper offices on the Pacific Coast. I ought to know a story when I see one. If this isn't a rip-snorting, go-get-'em photoplay, you can have my right eye for a golf-ball. Yet here it is, just back from its twenty-third jaunt in one of Uncle Sam's jitney mail-trucks!"

With an impatient gesture, he laid his prodigal brain-child upon my desk, and, informing me that he would return the day following to learn my opinion, he strode out of the room.

An hour later, when opportunity presented itself, I picked up the photoplay in question and began to peruse it carefully. In fact, I read it with unusual caution—for I realized that Jack Smith (which isn't his name, of course) spoke the truth when he proclaimed himself a veteran writer, and I was more than curious to learn why he had fallen so flat in his effort to turn out a successful screen-drama.

I KNEW, of course, that there must be some vital flaw in the story. Scenario editors—despite the popular misconception—do not throw out photoplays which are worth producing. Indeed, the cry is arising from every studio: "Where can we get a 'big' story?" Readers have combed the market, examining every printed book, or play, that has been produced within the past century, thinking that possibly some available material might be found

therein. Some of the larger producers have even gone to the expense of sending special representatives to Europe to dig up stories from ancient libraries, or from private homes which may contain rare collections of books in the original tongues of various lands. But the best have long since been produced. There is no alternative for the motion-picture magnates but to buy and produce stories written directly for the screen. And, knowing these facts, I was certain that Jack Smith's photoplay was not the ideal screen-vehicle which he thought it to be.

WELL, I found the flaw. It almost jumped up at me from the typewritten pages and hit me squarely between the eyes. Briefly, the story ran something like this: "Disappointed, when Jane Emerson, his sweetheart, jilts him for a rival—a wealthy oriental importer—at an elaborate ball in a San Francisco mansion, Jerry Adamson seeks consolation in the underworld of Chinatown. He is struck over the head in a Chinese 'joint' by emissaries of his rival, who fears his revenge, carried aboard the schooner Nancy N., and wakes up on the high seas. Following a fight, in which he throws a bomb into the forward hatch, wrecking the schooner, Jerry and the crew are rescued by the liner Cedric. On board the Cedric Jerry meets Rose Astor, whom he learns to love during the voyage. Her father is bound for Tibet, to undertake geological surveys. En route, the party, which Jerry has joined, is set upon in the crooked streets of Shanghai. In a terrific battle Jerry saves the girl from a crowd of infuriated natives. It is then that she realizes that he is her ideal man. The father, however, objects to the affair. Weeks later, in the mountain fastnesses of Tibet, the father falls down a mountain-side into the crevasse of a glacier. Jerry



enters the magnificent palace of a Tibetan ruler, at the risk of his life, disguised as a harem girl, and steals dynamite from the arsenal. Returning to the mountain, he blows up the lower part of the glacier, widening the crevasse and enabling him to lower himself with a rope and to rescue the geologist. The father, in gratitude, withdraws his objections to the match, and wedding bells ring as the picture ends."

**N**OW, what is wrong with that story—which, of course, was more fully motivated and logically knit in the original manuscript? Had my friend been taken into the confidence of the producers, he would have been told at once that the cost of production of such a photoplay would be almost prohibitive. Undoubtedly that was the main reason which forced scenario editors to reject the manuscript. Enumerating the "sets" which would have to be constructed for the drama in question, we find that they would include: Interior of a San Francisco mansion; Chinese underworld "joint," passageways, streets, etc.; cabin, forecastle, etc., of a schooner; cabins, etc., of the liner *Cedric*; street set for the scenes in Shanghai; hotel rooms and lobbies; elaborate interior of Tibetan ruler's palace, including passageways and interior of arsenal. In addition to this, the producing company would be under the terrific expense of chartering a schooner and of paying a steamship company a heavy sum for the use of a large vessel in the rescue scene. Last, but far from least, the company would be forced to transport the cast to a location which would include a mountainside and a glacier; and, since the nearest location of this sort is hundreds of miles from any studio, this item alone would be almost prohibitive in cost. Roughly speaking, my friend's story—as written—could not be produced for less than a quarter-million dollars, and that, except in rare instances, would be out of the question. Despite the claims of press agents, not more than two or three pictures annually cost producers more than \$100,000. The average production, in these days of financial stringency, is placed upon the market at a total expense of less than \$50,000.

How, then, you may ask, is the scenario writer to know what to write? How is one

with no technical knowledge of picture production to estimate the cost of producing his story?

The solution is much more simple than may appear at first glance. Don't attempt to estimate production costs. But stick to simplicity in your stories. Write simple, human dramas, with small casts; dramas in which the interest is gained by the reaction of traits of character, exemplified by logical action; dramas which will be just as virile and appealing if laid in Podunk, Missouri, or Corncob Center, Kansas, as they would be if laid in Shanghai, China, or Cairo, Egypt. Human nature is the same the world over, and the story based upon real people, instead of the bizarre, thrilling deeds of a superman hero or heroine will be the most successful. Undoubtedly a picture that contains the wealth of plot action outlined in the story written by my friend Smith would be interesting, but it could never compete with such a drama as "Over the Hill," which, I have been told, was one of the least expensive feature films ever offered to the public, yet one of the biggest hits of the past year.

**T**HE short-story writer, or the novelist, who has not made a special study of screen-technique, is prone to fall into the error of attempting the bizarre, the improbable, in his first attempts at photoplay writing. Forgetting that everything he places upon paper must be transferred to celluloid—that the places he describes, the elaborate palaces, the ballrooms, the foreign towns, must be actually constructed and photographed—he allows his imagination to run wild. The amateur, who has never been handicapped by fiction training, has a great advantage over the veteran author in this respect. From the first, the person who writes for the screen only will bear in mind the mechanical limitations of his medium, and consequently will almost invariably employ incidents and situations which can take place in whatever locale the studio technicians may wish to put them. Many of the small-town, simple original stories produced by Charles Ray, for instance, were written so that they would have been just as effective in one "dress" as in another. Such pictures can be put on at a cost of \$25,000, or may run up to a million—just as the producer de-



sires. This elasticity is not to be found in a production that must gain its success by appealing to the public's love of gorgeous, expensive spectacles.

When picture magnates balanced their books at the end of last year, they discovered that the big superspecial spectacles, though possibly playing to larger audiences, had not shown as great a profit, proportionate to cost, as had the less elaborate "heart interest" features; and, being business men, they are veering farther and farther from such types of films as "Intolerance," or "Foolish Wives," and toward pictures similar in cost and appeal to "Over the Hill," or "The Old Nest."

The wise photoplay writer will bear in mind, at all times, this vital matter of production cost. But to do this, it is not necessary to work in the studios, nor to have a technical knowledge of building sets. It is necessary to know what constitutes a real screen-story—to write about real people, who live, suffer, and love in one's photoplays just as folks live, suffer, and love in the world about us. It is essential to gain a knowledge of screen-values, of unity, of drama. If your story is real, honest-to-goodness drama, rightly constructed, it could—to draw a rather exaggerated figure—be played on a bare stage, against a black drop, and still achieve success.

## Easy Reading---Hard Writing

By H. Bedford-Jones

*Author of "The Fiction Business," and Short-Stories and Serials  
Numbered by the Hundreds*

TWO friends of mine, hard workers and ambitious writers, have recently come to me with troublesome manuscripts. Their difficulties seem to present one very common difficulty to all writers—that of making the story easy to read. I do not set myself up as an exponent of how to write, but this matter may interest all writers.

A fiction manuscript for a popular magazine has only one object—that of entertainment. It must be smooth-running and easy reading. It is prepared primarily, however, for the eye of the editor. Your object is to sell it. The editor's object is to present it to the eye of the public; and he is more likely to buy it if he is not forced to make a great number of changes in its details.

Two of these details nearly always cause trouble to all of us, whether old or new hands at the game. One is dialect; the other is paragraphing. Both appeal direct to the editorial eye.

One of my friends is Scotch, and his characters are invariably prolific in the use of the Scots dialect. He writes it correctly and fluently, but it makes very difficult reading. There is a way of getting around this.

Then my friend Max has just shown me a manuscript in which appear the following sentences, chosen as samples of his Western dialect, which he reports quite accurately and from first-hand knowledge:

"Whether to kill y', an' eat y' or just hang y'."

"Ye've taken on a heap a trouble."

What is wrong here? When spoken, nothing at all. When presented to the eye, everything!

Cowboy dialect still persists in stories in turning "you" into "yuh." It might better be "ye," which represents the sound without offending the eye; and yet this sound is used for "you" only occasionally, not invariably. Again, "of" is not represented in print by the letter a, no matter how right is the sound thereof. It should of course be "o'"—but not in every case either. Let us look at these two samples of dialect.

The most careless speaker will say "A heap o' trouble," but he will not say "Gimme a dish o' apples." He will say "Gimme a dish of apples," because to delete the letter f in this instance is to make a positive struggle; and dialect runs along the line of least resistance.

The same general rule applies to the word "you." A man says "Listen! You

ain't the whole thing in this crowd! Y'ain't nothin'! Git out o' here with ye!" There are three uses of the word in one speech, varying according to their emphasis. Dialect is not consistent, except in its very inconsistency.

The best way to achieve dialect of this sort, which aims to express the rough character of the speaker, is to speak it aloud while writing it, then jot down the word in a way that will not offend the eye of plausibility. The villain, upon encountering the hero, will not ejaculate "Ye!" or "Yuh!". He will say "You!"

**R**EVERTING to my Scotch friend, a little of such a dish goes a long way. We do not need to write an entire speech in dialect in order to make the reader understand that a Scot is speaking. An occasional word or expression does the trick much better for our purposes. We are not concerned with making a story true to life, remember—we are writing for the eye of the editor; we want to make the thing read easily, with enough naturalness to get across plausibly.

This is why the editor usually dislikes dialect stories—because they are overdone so far as the reading eye is concerned. He does not like apostrophes strung all over the page; therefore, cut an occasional "taking" into "takin'," and be content.

There is, in fact, no absolute rule to follow; rules are absurdities in writing fiction. A Chinaman sometimes uses the labial in place of the letter r, but not always. I recently read an article on dialect in which one author was jeered at because he made a Frenchman say "ze" for "the"; yet many Frenchmen do just that thing, others don't. A Mexican may do the same thing, while a Spaniard who speaks pure Castilian will say "the." Then the best of English writers fall down, even today, because all their American characters say "I guess" and "I allow" at every possible moment. We have changed since Dickens's day.

What I should like to stress in all this, merely as my own observation and not as any set formula, is that dialect may be successfully indicated here and there, without being persistently used. The magazine reader likes that. His story is not slowed

up. His brain is able to run right along with his eye.

The other detail in preparing a manuscript is paragraphing. By this I do not mean paragraphing as set forth in grammatical works; far from it, brethren! The rules of paragraphing have nothing to do with us. We write to the eye alone.

Then, paragraph for strength. The best example I can think of is Hugo. Take any of his books, open it almost anywhere; you will come upon a few simple words, which in themselves are slight, yet whose force to your brain is like a hammer-blow. He can say "This man was Johnson," and the words will positively impact on your eye. Why? Because they hold all the cumulative force of the preceding paragraph, but are put into a short, curt paragraph by themselves.

Hugo overdoes the thing to English eyes, yet it is done magnificently. Our magazine fiction demands short paragraphs, a dozen lines of typing at the most. Since a strong sentence in the middle will weaken the whole, end your paragraph there and begin a new one. Play always for strength at the end.

Paragraphing to the eye is hard to resolve into words. Here is an example taken from a Blue Book story and slightly changed for emphasis:

He cocked his head to one side, and his glittering eyes dwelt upon Sing Toy with a speculative air. \*As for Sing, that astute Celestial knew the futility of fighting for what is not worth the battle. He wisely concluded that he could do without the lady in future, as she would be of no further use to him if publicly exposed. \*Therefore, from his desk he took the packet of letters and, with a bland smile, held them out to the white man. That was his only answer. \*Smith had won.

Read this over, and it makes a good paragraph. Break it up as indicated, and it makes four much better paragraphs, so far as the eye is concerned. The words are emphasized.

Try it on your own paragraphs. What suits me may not suit you. Your style of writing may demand long paragraphs. On the other hand, it may not; and a long paragraph must be cumulative in effect, and with a smashing hit at the end, in order to get in its work.

# The Barrel

## Out of Which Anything May Tumble

The old-time editor was accustomed to speak of the author's accumulation of dog-eared manuscripts as his "barrel." When a writer, after receiving a bit of encouragement, began to fire his brain-products at the editor by the dozens, he was likely to draw some such protest as this: "What are you doing—emptying your barrel at me?" Other associations cling to the word. For example, there was the fascinating "grab barrel" at the church fair. Almost anything is likely to come tumbling out of a barrel—which makes the title appropriate for this department. Readers are invited to assist the editors in keeping the barrel filled.

Those writers who feel that they are not putting their best into their writing, because the public does not desire and will not pay for the best, might adopt the plan of Arnold Bennett, the English novelist, of devoting part of his time to writing works that will advance his reputation as an artist and the remainder to salable stuff. Probably most readers find Bennett's "pot-boilers" the more entertaining.

\* \* \* \* \*

It is interesting to note that Miss Viola Roseboro' is fiction editor of the new *McClure's Magazine*. Miss Roseboro' was fiction editor for S. S. McClure when he formerly edited the magazine, up to seven years ago, and she is credited with having "discovered" scores of authors. Mr. McClure writes: "She takes up every manuscript in the hope that it may be a gem." The first stories published by Rex Beach, Edwin Le Fevre, Arthur Train, O. Henry, George Madden Martin, and Myra Kelly were accepted by Miss Roseboro', it is claimed. Two new writers were introduced in the first number of *McClure's*—that for March—issued by the new management.

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Alfred A. Knopf, New York publisher, is authority for the statement that "European interest in American fiction is confined to cheap detective stories, Wild West tales and fashion magazines." In its literary taste Europe is not very different from New York.

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### SHARE YOUR REJECTION LETTERS

"Let's have a symposium of rejection letters." This is the suggestion made by one reader of *THE STUDENT WRITER*. He elaborates: "Sometimes when the editor writes you a personal letter in rejecting your manuscript (or perhaps accepting it), he makes a comment which throws light on his general policy. Why not share these bits of editorial wisdom with one another? The editors won't object, because it will disseminate informa-

tion and may save them time. The names of the recipients needn't be mentioned. The editors of *THE STUDENT WRITER* can be trusted to select those letters or passages which are really of general interest."

The suggestion is a good one, and "The Barrel" is just the department through which to make public such editorial observations. Who will contribute a few recent editorial letters for a starter?

\* \* \* \* \*

Many writers confess that they carry a pencil and tablet to bed with them. Knut Hamsun, the Scandinavian poet, says that he keeps pencil and paper near his bedside so that when an idea comes to him he can jot it down before it escapes. Having fallen into the habit of sleeplessness in youth, Hamsun frequently lies awake thinking out themes for poems.

\* \* \* \* \*

### SLIPS AND FLIPS

Even experienced authors occasionally make mistakes and careful editors let them get into print. Sometimes they are grateful for an opportunity to explain their "slips." From time to time, under this heading, *THE STUDENT WRITER* will publish brief comments from readers on errors that have appeared in published literature, giving the author a chance to present his "alibi," when possible. Here is one to begin with:

#### The Criticism:

Story, "The Shadow," *People's Magazine*, February 10th. I notice that H. Bedford-Jones introduces a character, Dixon, who is one-eyed. Later, his "eyes" are referred to. Also, the Spanish is quoted: "*Dame e la Sombra*" when it should certainly be "*a la Sombra*." Am I right?  
A. HAWKWOOD.

#### Answer, by the author:

Mr. H. is dead right. I made Dixon one-eyed for a certain purpose, abandoned that purpose, forgot to make the change in his description, and careless revision failed to catch it. As for the Spanish, I wrote it right in the first place but the compositor knew better.  
H. B.-J.

\* \* \* \* \*

### ADDITIONAL MARKET DATA

One good thing about the quarterly publication of "The Handy Market List" in *THE STUDENT WRITER* is the opportunity it gives for checking up on information concerning the magazines. Several of the market tips in this issue are the result of corrections or additional data supplied by editors and readers. We feel that our sub-

scribers are entitled to the information contained in the two letters which follow:

*Dear Mr. Hawkins:*

Just received copy of March **STUDENT WRITER** and wish to thank you for the notice given us in the Market Department.

However, when I turn to page 27, I must exclaim, "Have a heart!" Why list *The Photodramatist* in the "Secondary and Indefinite Markets"? Assuredly we are financially responsible and buy considerable material each month. A magazine with a circulation of 27,500, is hardly a secondary magazine, it seems to me. Why not place us under List C—"Trade and Class Publications"? We are a class magazine, and I believe that we should be listed as such.

Trusting that you will see the justice of my plaintive wail, and thanking you for many favors, I am

Sincerely yours,  
HUBERT LA DUE,  
Editor.

Los Angeles.

*Dear Willard Hawkins:*

At the head of your "Handy Market List" you say you welcome additional data on which to base magazine price-ratings, and in this connection will you let me make the suggestion that, in my opinion, you have *Red Book* listed too low—and perhaps *Blue Book*.

*Red Book* may pay a few writers less than five cents, but against that consider Tarkington, Rupert Hughes, Oppenheim, Mrs. Wharton, Gerald Beaumont, and others who get very much more than five. The average must be well over five; shouldn't *Red Book* be marked "first-class rates" rather than "good rates"?

If you figure that "good rates" is a higher rating than "1 cent up," then it seems to me *Blue Book* ought to be marked "good rates." It is true they pay a good many people two cents and less, but they go as high as five, anyway, and I think their average must be more than two.

All of which is set down merely with the idea of being helpful as to the accuracy of your list.  
Yours Sincerely, J. FRANK DAVIS.

**That THE STUDENT WRITER should have gained a reputation for QUALITY CIRCULATION, after having been published in its enlarged format for less than six months, is significant.**

We are proud to publish letters such as this, from an advertiser who has discovered the magazine to be, in truth, the real author's trade journal.

Publisher of **THE STUDENT WRITER**,  
Denver, Colorado.

My Dear Mr. Hawkins:

I have just received the second copy of *The Student Writer* containing my little advertisement since we started it, and I am taking the liberty of writing you with regard to the success of my plan and service to authors and the wonderful success I have enjoyed from its display in *The Student Writer*.

We have done considerable advertising in the writing game, and I have run similar ads. in a number of literary magazines, but I have received far better results from *The Student Writer* than any publication with which I have had any dealings.

First, *The Student Writer* reaches, or seems to reach, the **REAL WRITERS** in the game, which brings results other publications I have used do not. We have received letters and furnished information to Authors whose names are appearing monthly in *Cosmopolitan*, *Saturday Evening Post*, *Atlantic Monthly*, *Country Gentleman*, *Machinery*, *Good Roads*, *Motordom*, *Tires*, *System*, and many other very popular publications.

Your magazine is certainly read and being appreciated by many authors who have really "landed" and are big names in the writing world. I would like to tell you the names of some who are using our service, but you will appreciate that our entire service is strictly confidential. We have received letters from Texas, Oregon, California, Alabama, Florida, Alberta, Canada; Alaska, New York City, Cuba, Saskatchewan, Hawaiian Islands, and many other points. This gives some idea of where your *Student Writer* is going and where it is being read.

We have some strange information indeed to furnish. One of our clients asked for information with regard to Bakelite, another with regard to the Smith family; another asked for information on Alcohol. One client asked if we had clippings on Kissing, another asked for clippings of what she called "Strong Come-backs," meaning witty answers, etc. One client asked seven questions in a single sentence and enclosed twenty-five dollars, saying he would be "tickled to death" to pay that if I could furnish the required information.

We furnished one client with a copy of the unpublished works of Bobby Burns at a cost to him of ten dollars and twelve cents. We sent another client a copy of the August, 1904, issue of *Scribner's* at a cost to him of one dollar and thirty-five cents.

Our service seems to be appreciated by the writing fraternity and we want you to know that we certainly appreciate *The Student Writer* and consider it the best in its field, reaching the **REAL** writers.

Hoosick Falls, N. Y.  
March 16th, 1922.

Very sincerely yours,  
HOOSICK I. P. BUREAU,  
Per Manager.



# Synthetic Characterization

## *Analysis of Various Methods Successfully Employed for Endowing Fictional Creations With Life; Fourth Article in the "Conscious Evolution" Series*

By David Raffelock

**W**E are all egoists. Be egoists. There is no truth but my truth. No world but my world. I am I! Thus said Max Stirner, the greatest of egoistic philosophers, and thus may the fictional adviser say to your characters. You are you! No two proverbial peas in a pod are identically alike, no two persons see the same shade of blue, though they look at the same cerulean sky.

Two psychological facts regarding human nature should be understood by the author. First, basically no man is cast in a wholly different mold from that of his fellow beings; in most respects he is a pattern of hundreds of others of the same type, and only supermen like Napoleon, Wagner, Baudelaire, Nietzsche and Blake individualize the race's fundamental qualities until they stand alone, geniuses of the ego. Second, each individual of every type varies in some degree. His reactions to stimuli are different from those of a twin brother who has been reared in the same environment and received the same training; his thoughts and mannerisms vary perceptibly, though perhaps only by a nuance.

The novice-writer unlearned in psychoanalysis, psychology, and kindred sciences that reveal the workings of the human mechanism, will do well to avoid writing about supermen, confining himself to learning the simple differences that make distinguishable to the ordinary man one person from another.

The art of characterization requires conscious understanding. Every day we come in contact with persons who differ from one another; always we have ourselves to reveal to us how one individual differs in so many ways from others we know. Why is it then that the author frequently fails to differentiate his story-people—that he falls into such "characterization" as this:

She was dressed in black, and her face was very pale, topped by very black hair.

Chiefly, it is because he lacks conscious understanding of the methods of characterization. No one who realized that characterization means differentiation would write the foregoing description. He might as well say,

I bought a ring with a stone in it,

and mean thereby to indicate that he purchased a white-gold ring set with a two-carat yellow diamond.

The reader is interested in story-people not only because of what they do, but also because a well-written story makes vivid such men and women as he often sees but lacks acquaintance or insight for understanding.

Much of Henry James's art lies in his power to differentiate his characters. He was no doubt highly conscious of the mechanics of characterization, and when he wrote of the palefaced woman dressed in black he made her stand out from every other pale woman similarly clothed. In "The Private Life" he thus describes her:

I had originally been rather afraid of her, thinking her, with her stiff silences and the extreme blackness of almost everything that made up her person, somewhat hard, even saturnine. Her paleness seemed slightly gray, and her glossy black hair metallic, like the brooches and bands and combs with which it was inveterately adorned. She was perpetually in mourning.

Modern writers seldom give a photographic description of a character—that is, present in one paragraph a complete portrayal and have done with picturization. Often the picture is not completed until well along in the story. For example, the description of the pale, dark-haired woman may be given in the course of several paragraphs with perhaps a hundred words or more between each bit, as follows:

... she said, as darkly as the extreme blackness of almost everything that made up her person.

The silence of the Alps seemed accentuated by her stiff silences, and I was rather afraid of her, thinking her somewhat hard, even a little saturnine.

As I greeted her this morning I noticed that her paleness seemed slightly gray.

She removed her hat, and her glossy black hair impressed me as being metallic, like the brooches and bands and combs with which it was inveterately adorned.

Thus, bit by bit her appearance and a suggestion of her mental qualities would be built up. However, the writer should not suppose that characterization is accomplished only by giving a word-picture of the person in question. This might suffice in disposing of a minor character, but the principal actors in a story are made to live by a more complex method. From the following example it becomes evident why the author cannot feel that he has satisfactorily created a character when he has described him. An author may say of his hero:

He was a calm professorial gentleman whose diction was as precise and dignified as his manner.

while, throughout the story the reader may be made to *see* the man in an entirely different way—due to the author's failure to co-ordinate the character's actions and dialogue with his description—by such passages as this:

He punched the arm of the stranger next to him at the theater, and said in a loud voice, "My, isn't it tough how things will happen!"

**T**HE author should know the various methods or devices of synthetic characterization.

*Dialogue* should be differentiated so as to reveal the character of the participant who is speaking. This is done in a more subtle way than by employing "trick" words, such as certain slang phrases, or by dropping the "g" of "-ing" endings, or even by repetition of certain stock words, as "Well, well!" When Markheim speaks, in Stevenson's story of that name, the reader is aware who is speaking, because he puts an emotion into the words that no one else would. Consider how various fictional characters might say, "I ask you for a Christmas present and you give me a mirror. What do you mean by that?" and then observe how Markheim declares himself:

"I ask you for a Christmas present, and you give me this—this damned reminder of years and sins and follies—this hand conscience. Did you mean it? Had you a thought in your mind? Tell me."

*Mental qualities* are indicative of character, especially in a subjective story where thoughts of the characters are given. The dialogue may be commonplace, whereas the mental processes may be highly individual. In the case of a colorless sort of man a few words as to his subjective qualities may at once differentiate him, as in the following quotation from "The Visits" by Henry James:

He had a mind like a large full milk-pan and his wit was as thick as cream.

An even more subtle delineation, by revealing the character's thoughts, is accomplished in Charles J. Finger's story, "The Lizard God" (in *All's Well*). Here a professor and curator of a museum is the narrator. No description of him is given, but the reader is made to see and understand the man perfectly from such passages as this:

His argument of course was absurd, and at the moment I had no answer ready, though since I have thought of the thing I should have said.

Here another means of characterization enters in—*Occupation*. By knowing that the man is a professor the reader learns something definite of his nature—just as we should expect a grave-digger or a public executioner to have peculiarities different from those of other men.

A *peculiarity*, whether of thought or action, is always a good means of differentiation, and the writer has but to study the people with whom he comes in contact to learn of countless mannerisms, obsessions, and idiosyncrasies. Sherwood Anderson created a very vivid character whose eccentricity serves as a medium for telling the excellent story, "Brothers" (*The Bookman*). Here is a description of his obsession:

He has told me of men and women who were his brothers and sisters, his cousins, aunts, uncles, brothers-in-law. The notion has possessed him. He cannot draw close to people near at hand so he gets hold of a name out of the newspapers, and his mind plays with it.

A character can be made to escape a colorless classification by his *dress*. Wit-

ness Strindberg's "His clothes fit him like the bark of a tree." Authors interested in pseudoscientific studies can seriously or facetiously use the following terms to reveal character: auras, phrenology, graphology, palmistry. The student of the "complexes," etc., of psychoanalysis may use dream symbols and other subconscious materials to reveal the subtle forces that determine and differentiate every man's character. Sherwood Anderson's unusual story, "The Other Woman" (*The Little Review*), deals with the psychological situation of a man who is "Freudian," as young psychoanalysts would term him.

A man's character may also be revealed, though he is at no time introduced in the story, by the influence he has upon those who play the important roles of the narrative.

THE foregoing is a fairly comprehensive synopsis of the various fictional devices which may be used to reveal character. Most authors employ more than one of these methods; all may well be used.

Once a character has been made vivid to the reader, the simple device of *repetition* maintains the sharpness, as for instance in one of Anton Chekhov's stories, where the hero's dialogue is constantly marked by his penchant for rhyming meaningless words.

If a character has some distinguishing feature, as a crooked nose, it may be well to make the most of the characteristic. The man can be kept clear by varying the reference to him from, say, "John went out," to "The man with the crooked nose went out."

Variety may be obtained in repetition by comparisons, as, "John's scheme was unquestionably crooked, as obviously so as his nose"; and by the dialogue of other characters, as "Here comes an honest man," said Bert, "with a straight face—and a crooked nose, which belies his honesty."

The author should learn to use his judgment so that he will be able to make use of this legitimate device and yet not abuse it.

Good characterization vitalizes a story, for it gives reality to events. If the reader is made to believe that your dramatis personæ live, he will accept almost any adventure that logically befalls them.

The necessity for characterization is obvious. How to create your own men and women is a responsibility that must remain

## THE HAMMOND

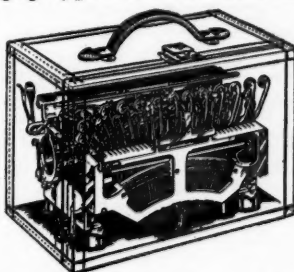
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moves his collar and tie, carefully takes off his coat, pats it, and hangs it up by the loop behind the collar. Another jerks off his collar, struggles out of his coat, and jabs it on the nearest hanger. Learn how you can use in your writing what you see.

To understand the subjective characteristics of people, you will find is a more difficult problem. Good reading will help. Analysis of yourself, especially of the stimuli that motivate your actions and of the manner in which you react to them, will prove invaluable instruction in the art of characterization.

**STUDY** the faces of people you see in the street; peer into their eyes and try to read what is hidden there. If you are good at mimicking, imitate the expressions you see on faces; note the feelings aroused within you by your play-acting, and you will become an adept at reading people's emotions and thoughts from their expressions. Remember how you mirrored hate, scorn, surprise, and other emotions, and you will know how to describe your characters when you want to reveal them expressing these feelings.

No rule can be given that will enable you to realize your characters. Some authors live in imagination the lives of their characters; some write biographies of their casts; others try their characters in various situations in order to get a complete understanding of them. But each writer must choose his own method.

See that your people resemble everyday men and women—they should not, generally speaking, be too good or too bad. The ruling passions have been listed in this way: Honor, strife, revenge, money, pride, music, nature, children, friendship, loyalty, and duty. Let your people be actuated by these, or similar, everyday motives.

Short-stories offer less opportunity for creating great individual characters, as did Shakespeare, Dickens, Thackeray and Balzac in longer fictional forms, though Henry James, Rudyard Kipling, and many of the Russian authors, attained notable results with the short-story. There is always a place, both in popular fiction and in art, for the writer who can fashion men and women and give them the breath of life and the stamp of individuality.



# "Dan Lamont's Dilemma"

## *Report on the March Wit-Sharpener Prize Contest; a Problem Situation for April*

**T**HE composite Dan Lamont, of over a hundred solutions to the March Wit-Sharpener contest, had to face charges ranging from petty larceny to murder.

The principal fault of contestants was failure to give Dan an active part in the story. As soon as he was arrested others were made to take the action in hand and either get Dan into further trouble or release him from his dilemma. Improbability was a frequent fault.

The contest editor was again surprised to find that most of the solutions were similar in development, following broadly this outline: Dan is arrested and placed in jail; girl of the photograph who is engaged to Masterson, Jr., comes to his rescue; the guilty persons, who tried to fasten another's crime on Dan, are caught, the girl decides that Dan will do as a substitute for her fiancée.

This was the March problem:

Thrown upon his own resources, Dan Lamont, noted chiefly for his ability to wear good clothes, answers an advertisement for "young man of good build and refinement." Eccentric-appearing old gentleman who inserted the advertisement offers Dan \$100 if he will go under ether for a harmless medical experiment, without asking questions. "Make it \$500 and I will," says Dan rashly. He wakes to find himself in a Pullman drawing room, equipped with expensive traveling bag and effects, good clothes, and a pocket-book containing the \$500, a pretty girl's photo, and a ticket to the end of the line. Porter informs him he was brought on the night before, apparently intoxicated. Alighting from train at its destination, Dan is arrested by officers, who identify him as Harvey Masterson, Jr., by a tailor's label in his coat. . . .

Miss Mary R. Merriman of 1304 Prairie Ave., Beloit, Wis., was given first prize. Her solution was considered more original than the others, making a rattling good mystery-story development with an unexpected ending.

### *First Prize Winner*

Dan Lamont answers the advertisement in Montreal, Canada. The line on which he finds himself has a terminal in Minneapolis, Minn. Here he

finds himself in due time. At the station he is arrested by two officers.

He declares that it is a mistake, and he is not Harvey Masterson, but he has no way to prove it. Finally, he suggests that the original of the girl's photograph (which has in pencil on the back of the dull leather frame, "From Julia to Harvey, with love"), will prove that he was not Harvey Masterson. The address on the back of the photo, which is also written in pencil, is a Minneapolis address; but the girl's surname is not given. The officers agree to accompany him to this address.

They do so. The girl, however, accuses him immediately as "Harvey," appearing very angry at him, and demanding that he return her photo at once. He gives it to her.

As soon as she receives the picture she asks Dan on his word of honor not to divulge what he sees. He gives his word, and she opens the frame of the picture, and from behind the photo inside the frame she takes from a small compartment several marvelous diamonds.

The supposed detectives let the man go. He understands that he has been made a catspaw to smuggle the jewels into the United States from Canada, and that he cannot divulge it without implicating himself, for he was the one that brought the diamonds across the line. So he goes, taking with him the new traveling bag, the money, and wearing his new clothes, and heads for the nearest clothing store, where he can remove all traces of himself as "Harvey Masterson."

Second place was won by Miss Rosalind Ach Schwab of 821 Mann Place, Avondale, Cincinnati, Ohio. Although this solution follows somewhat the popular plan, yet it is satisfactorily developed and incorporates a few new elements.

### *Second Prize Winner*

Dan submits, merely asking of what he is accused. Masterson is famous counterfeiter for whom Larue, secret service man, has been seeking, and for whom large reward is offered. Larue had received tip from unknown source, and had telegraphed St. Louis. Dan sends for Peter Rathbone, friend of his father, who identifies him; identification confirmed when Larue telegraphs Bertillon measurements of Masterson. Dan released. The five hundred dollars is of course counterfeit.

Rathbone, pitying Dan's plight, lends money for return trip to New York, and offers position if Dan can prove his mettle by tracking Masterson, who has plainly arranged to throw Larue on false scent, while he makes his get-away. Larue is hunting Masterson's confederates near Boston.

(Continued on Page 24)

**Ready at Last——**

**THE STUDENT WRITER'S  
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**The Basic Principle**

The principle underlying the course is simple. In stating it, we are stating also the important respect in which it differs from the majority of courses heretofore offered the writer. Here it is in a nutshell:

Instead of being merely a course of study, **The Student Writer** plan is a **system of training**.

It is comparatively easy to teach the theory of short-story writing. But one may have a perfect grasp of the rules and conventions and still be unable to write a story.

Through a series of ingenious and carefully graded lessons, **The Student Writer's Simplified Training Course** enables the student to write. As he progresses, he discovers in the so-called rules or conventions of fictional construction, not difficult theories to master, but aids for writing effectively.

The manner in which the course opens up the way for actual production on the part of the student is one of its powerful factors for advancement. Another compelling feature is this:

The course does not merely teach story-writing in the abstract—it teaches the writing of modern stories.

**Training is Intensive**

Analysis of the magazines reveals that at the present time some half-dozen types of short-story predominate. These are the types toward which editors are favorably inclined. Authors who specialize in writing them stand a better chance of succeeding than otherwise, because they are swimming with the current of the demand.

Of these popular forms of fiction, **The Student Writer Simplified Course** isolates three representative types—the three which are in strongest demand. The training of students is concentrated upon these three types of modern short-story.

This eliminates the perplexing question: "What shall I write in order to stand the best show of pleasing the editors?"

By reason of this phase alone, the instruction is more intensive than that given in the majority of courses and takes the student farther in proportion to the time and effort expended. Care is taken, however, to dwell suffi-

**The Essential Quality**

"No matter how well planned a course of instruction may be, or how sound its principles in theory, the plan is dead—lifeless—unless it possesses a certain essential quality. We may call it the practical quality, or effectiveness, or "punch." It is recognized by the fact that it works.

The point is made clear if we consider the analogy of a locomotive. Some very good theoretical courses are like a locomotive in the shops. In theory it is perfect; every part fits into its place with nicety, and the whole structure is mechanically perfect. Yet, as it stands, the great locomotive is as inert as a pile of scrap iron. Mastering its parts will get the student nowhere. What he needs, in order to put life and power into the locomotive, is **steam**. With this essential thing added, the mass of iron and steel becomes vibrant, pulsing, an engine for accomplishment and progress.

Those familiar with many of the courses offered, not only in authorship but other subjects, will realize the application. A course of study may supply the student with an array of rules and formulas, of things to do and things not to do—but this equipment is dull and purposeless in itself.

**The Student Writer Simplified Training Course** shows the student how to get up **steam**. It provides the training that sets his wheels in motion—that starts him to producing.

ently upon other varieties of fiction to give an understanding of them, and to insure that future progress will be limited only by the student's natural ability and personal tastes.

**The Student Writer's Simplified Training Course in Short-Story Writing** is destined to become the recognized leader among systems of preparation for fiction writing. Without reservation, we believe that it will result to the advantage of every earnest student of literary craftsmanship to undertake the course.

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It was not until after we had evolved the Simplified Training Course in Short-story Writing that we realized how new it is and how different from other systems.

"Why, this is a new idea in the training of story-writers!" exclaimed a well-known author to whom we showed a preliminary outline of the plan.

When we compared it with other courses, we realized that he was right, although at the outset we had not sought especially for novelty. Our aim was to develop a course that would be practical.

## New and Practical

We had evolved certain methods through our criticism work which we wished to combine and apply on a larger scale.

After the course had been prepared, the next consideration was placing its advantages at the disposal of students. We knew that we had a course embodying the most practical features that could be devised. But on summing it up we discovered that in order to meet the cost of putting the lessons into permanent form and recompensing the instructors, it would be necessary to charge in the neighborhood of \$150 for the course. This was a decided drawback. It would undoubtedly put the training beyond the reach of the majority.

The course was then subjected to a boiling-down process. The problem was to retain the essentials—to give all that we hoped to give—and yet simplify the instruction to the point where the cost would be reasonable.

## Cost Extremely Moderate

We succeeded better than our anticipations. The course as finally organized is simpler—probably clearer and more intensive—than as at first developed. It narrows down the study to three distinct types of modern short-story. It gives the student unlimited opportunity for practice, and provides that the maximum amount of the instructor's time and attention shall be given at intervals when the student most needs them. And the price is right.

Here are the low introductory terms:

**\$40.00 in advance pays for the course in full.**

We advocate payment in advance, partly because it simplifies our bookkeeping and partly because it leads the student to feel more definitely committed to complete the work. However, if payment of the full amount is impracticable, an advance payment of \$20.00 will be accepted and the balance, up to a total of \$45.00, may be paid in monthly installments of not less than \$5.00.

The plan of training involves the mastering of each detail of technique by means of special exercises.

## Widely Adaptable

One ingenious feature is the adaptability of the course to students of varying degrees of experience. The beginner is given aids and devices to aid him or her in completing the exercises, which the writer of greater experience and self-confidence may discard. For example, in connection with the study of plots, the beginner is assisted by a selection of suitable plot-germs, which we give for development, while the student who can do so will develop a plot idea more completely his own.

## Five Lesson Groups

The lessons are mailed to the student in five groups or divisions, each division comprising instruction material, models, and a series of assignments, and requiring the completion of a specific quota of the work.

We are not arbitrarily exacting, but students are not allowed to pass from one group of assignments to the next until they have done the best work of which they are capable.

Upon enrolling, the student receives the first group of lessons and assignments. As the assignments are completed, they are mailed to the instructor for judgment and criticism, while the student is kept busy upon further lessons in the same group. As he approaches the end of the first group, the second group of lessons is mailed to him, and so on.

## Outline of the Course

The first group of lessons revolves around the study of story structure in the abstract (although made practical by concrete models and exercises). The second, third and fourth groups involve specific training in the development, respectively, of the three types of modern short-story which have been chosen for intensive study. The fifth group of lessons deals with other popular types of fiction. The various phases of technique: dialogue—characterization—theme—plot—climax, etc., are dealt with intensively in connection with the types of story in which they are found most clearly defined. The course involves the development of several complete stories and story outlines.

This survey can scarcely more than hint at the scheme of the training course. It must be assimilated in full to be appreciated.

## Weigh the Advantages Carefully

Doesn't this sound like the course you have been waiting for?

If it appeals to you, the reasonable thing to do is to fill out the accompanying coupon and get started on the highway of production.

The training will be equally helpful and effective in your case even if you have taken other courses in story-writing.

We cannot tell you much more about the system than is explained in this announcement. However, inquiries will be cheerfully answered.

The reputation of The Student Writer and its literary criticism department should be sufficient guarantee of the thoroughness and worth of this course. We could not afford to put out an inferior service.

Let us number you among the first to secure the advantages of this training. The form appended is for your convenience.

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Enroll me as a student in your Simplified Training Course in Short-Story Writing, at the introductory price quoted, and send me the first division of lessons and assignments at once. I enclose—

[     ] \$40.00 in full payment for the course.  
—or—

[     ] \$20.00 as first payment, agreeing to pay the balance in monthly installments of not less than \$5.00, up to a total of \$45.00.



Dan returns east. Examines photograph. Remembers hearing woman laugh as he went under ether. Finds note scrawled on back of picture: "You poor, good-looking simp! Thanks for lovely vacation. Must give you something to remember me by." Through photographer, whose name is on picture, finds she is Clio Menton, wealthy society woman, from Riverside Drive. At her apartment house, learns Clio has left for parts unknown. After flirtation with telephone girl at apartment, finds Clio has been heard ordering tickets for Cuba. His money gone, Dan ships as steward for Cuba, by chance on same ship that Clio had taken. Through photograph and gossip with stewards, discovers she has villa near Havana.

There, he sees her driving with man of about Dan's build, whose features suggest eccentric appearing old man who doped him. Dan wires for Larue, who identifies and arrests stranger as Masterson. Dan receives reward. Evidence against Clio only circumstantial, she escapes. She coolly asks Dan to stay in Cuba, at her expense. Dan: "No more easy jobs. Me for St. Louis."

The third prize winner, J. Ainsworth Wood of 255 Teaneck Road, Ridgefield Park, N. J., increased the original mystery in his solution. Dan's love affair with the young female thief, however, might lessen its chance of winning editorial favor.

#### Third Prize Winner

After the delay caused by the difficulty of establishing his identity in a strange city, Dan is released, bent on unraveling the mystery. Vainly

he tries to trace the eccentric-appearing old gentleman from the place of "the harmless medical experiment."

The affair begins to prey on his mind, and after the manner of all nervous people he gives old-womanish attention to the security of the locks on his doors and windows at night. Imagine his amazement when the original of the pretty-girl photo appears before him in the middle of the night, apparently from nowhere, as beautiful and audacious and well-poised as Cleopatra.

Laughing at his dumbfounding, she tells him that there is a saying in her circle to the effect that "Love and Mastersons laugh at locksmiths."

She has come to thank him for serving as a decoy to throw off the police, who were hot on the trail of her brother, thereby enabling him to get safely out of the country after a particularly successful burglary.

In admitting her father (the eccentric-appearing old gentleman), herself, and her brother a trio of crooks, the girl makes no apology. Indeed, she boasts.

"No Masterson ever took anything from anyone who would suffer from the loss; no Masterson ever was accused of sneaky pettiness or of disregard of the policy of 'honor among thieves,' and no Masterson has ever known the humiliation of being captured."

And Dan decides to break a precedent and capture one very charming Masterson.

The new problem for April is of a different type from the preceding ones. We hope it will arouse as much interest as the others.

#### WIT-SHARPENER FOR APRIL

*Estelle Hancock has not married because she has never found the man she can love. Now she learns that she is covertly referred to as an "old maid." Bitter that society should ridicule a person who has refused to marry except for love, she decides to wed the wealthiest man she can. When she becomes engaged to Arnold Jard, multi-millionaire manufacturer, she finds her ideal lover in Manfred Willoughby. But she marries Jard. Manfred, famous painter of women, deserts his life-work, as he can no longer find interest in women after his disappointment. He sets out to seek revenge by entering business and trying to ruin Jard. One evening, about a year later, Estelle comes to him, and . . .*

**PROBLEM:** In not to exceed 300 words, work out this plot situation to an effective conclusion.

For the best development submitted a prize of \$5.00 will be given; for the second best, a prize of \$3.00, and for the third best a prize of \$2.00. Winning outlines will be published next month.

**CONDITIONS:** The plot outline as completed must contain not more than 300 words, exclusive of the original problem. The outline must be legibly typed or written. It will be returned only by special request, when accompanied by stamped envelope for that purpose.

Manuscripts must be received by the 15th of the month for which the contest is dated. Address Contest Editor, THE STUDENT WRITER, 1835 Champa Street, Denver, Colo.

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By H. BEDFORD-JONES

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- V. Doing the Work.
- VI. Plot.
- VII. The Deadly Sin.
- VIII. Story Construction—1.
- IX. Story Construction—2.
- X. Re-writing.
- XI. Your Manuscript.
- XII. The Fiction Market.
- XIII. Pitfalls.
- XIV. Honesty and Suggestion.
- XV. Something New About the Booklength.
- XVI. Hack Writing.
- XVII. Are Editors Human?
- XVIII. Material.
- XIX. Literature.
- XX. Prices Paid for Fiction.
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- XXII. Costs and Language.
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**The Literary Market**

(Continued from page 3)

"I Confess," Room 1515 Masonic Temple, New York, will pay at the rate of  $\frac{1}{2}$  cent a word for short-stories of 3000 to 3500 words, the editors write. "Serials should contain about 30,000 words for our purposes, but we are at present overstocked with such material. Stories should have strong plot; a good percentage should have emotional appeal of a clean sort. Human interest stories are desirable above all else. All should be told in the first person. We cannot use verse, fillers, or photographs."

Screenart Pictures, 39 Center Street, New Haven, Conn., Louis R. Harrison, scenario editor, writes: "At the present time we are in need of two-reel melodramas and five and six reel features suitable for all-star casts."

The Farmer's Wife, 61 E. Tenth Street, St. Paul, Minn., is open to the consideration of a two or three part serial. It pays on acceptance at  $\frac{3}{4}$  cent a word upward.

The Torchbearer, 810 Broadway, Nashville, Tenn., edited for girls, will pay up to 1 cent per word on acceptance for suitable material, writes E. B. Chappell, Jr., editor. "Healthy, inspiring material—the kind you would like your 15-year-old daughter to read—is desired. Illustrated articles from 500 to 1500 words, short-stories of 2000 words, serials of four to eight chapters, and verse, are sought."

Popular Radio is a new magazine to be edited by Kendall Banning of 16 Gramercy Park, New York. It will use human interest rather than technical material.

National Pictorial Monthly, 119 West Fortieth Street New York, is now edited by Arthur H. Howland.

People's Story Magazine, 79 Seventh Avenue, New York, is the new name substituted for People's Favorite Magazine.

Field and Stream, 25 W. Forty-fifth Street, New York, is anxious to secure out-of-door articles within 3000 words. It pays on acceptance at rates up to 1 cent a word. "We do not desire general descriptive articles or scenery photographs," the editors specify.

The Broom, the New York address of which was given in the March STUDENT WRITER as 3 East Nineteenth Street, should be listed at 3 East Ninth Street.

Comfort, Augusta, Maine, is very prompt in its payment for accepted material, its rates being about  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a cent a word for fiction.

The Bookman, 244 Madison Avenue, New York, writes that it is over-stocked.

Dennis, Harvey & Remington, Inc., 110 East Twenty-third Street, New York, within the past few weeks, have been returning literary material held for Progress, which suspended with the June, 1921, issue. No definite announcement concern-

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A special intensive summer course in plot-making will be conducted in New York by Mr. Uzzell in July.

ing the resumption of the magazine can yet be made, states Albert N. Dennis, editor.

*Life*, 17 West Thirty-first Street, New York, has advanced its rate of payment for dialogue jokes to \$5 each.

*Holland's Magazine*, Dallas, Tex., according to a letter from John W. Stayton, editor, "just now is buying scarcely anything."

*The Wheeler Syndicate*, 373 Fourth Avenue, New York writes: "We are overstocked in all our departments, and will not be in the market for anything new for many months to come."

*Tempo*, which was listed in the February **STUDENT WRITER** as having moved from Danvers, Mass., to 66 East Elm Street, Chicago, is still at Danvers, according to a correspondent.

*Snappy Stories* and *Live Stories* are now published at 9 E. Fortieth Street, New York.

*The Child's Hour*, Boston, has been discontinued.

*The Nation's Voice*, a publication announced for February by John Chase Farrell from 1347 L Street, Washington, D. C., fails to answer letters or to return manuscripts which were submitted to it.

*The Royal Feature Service*, Cleveland, Ohio, according to a correspondent, accepted a 3000-word story for syndication last June, made two promises concerning its release which were not carried out, and returned it February 25th with a mimeographed letter stating, "Our editor advises that he has more fiction matter on hand than he will need for a long time to come."

## Prize Contests

*The Southern Methodist University*, of Dallas, Tex., announces a \$100 prize for the best poem submitted in time to reach Dallas before May 1, 1922. The contest is open to all undergraduate students in American colleges and universities. Poems must not exceed 150 lines in length and each contestant must submit three typewritten copies of his poem. Each poem remains the property of the author, but it is stipulated that when a prize poem is published the words, "Prize poem, Southern Methodist University, 1922," shall be used. The Dallas man behind this offer also will award a prize of \$50, under the same conditions, for the best poem by a resident of Texas, and \$25 for the best poem by a Southern University student. Address Jay B. Hubbell, professor of English, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, Tex.

*The American Magazine*, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York, for its current prize contest closing April 20th, offers \$25, \$10, and \$5 for the best letters under 400 words in length on "The Most Helpful Thing I Ever Found Out About Myself."

*The Outlook*, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York, offers a first prize of \$25, a second prize of \$20, a third prize of \$15, and seven fourth prizes of \$10 for the best letters of 600 words or less from

# FORTUNES GOING BEGGING

Photoplay producers ready to pay big sums for stories but can't get them. One big corporation offers a novel test which is open to anyone without charge. Send for the Van Loan Questionnaire and test yourself in your own home.

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This single incident gives some idea of the desperate situation of the motion picture companies. With millions of capital to work with; with magnificent mechanical equipment, the industry is in danger of complete paralysis because the public demands better stories—and the number of people who can write those stories are only a handful. It is no longer a case of inviting new writers; the motion picture industry is literally reaching out in every direction. It offers to every intelligent man and woman—to you—the home test which revealed unsuspected talent in this Montana housewife. And it has a fortune to give you if you succeed.

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H. H. Van Loan, the celebrated photoplaywright, is responsible for the invention of the novel questionnaire which has uncovered hidden photodramatists in all walks of life. With Malcolm McLean, formerly professor of short story writing at Northwestern University, he hit upon the happy idea of adapting the tests which were used in the United States Army and applying them to this search for story-telling ability.

The results have been phenomenal. In the recent J. Parker Read, Jr., competition

all three prizes, amounting to \$5,000, were awarded to students of the Palmer Photoplay Corporation, which is conducting this search by means of the Van Loan Questionnaire.

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The whole purpose of this advertisement is to invite readers of The Student Writer to take the Van Loan Questionnaire test. In all sincerity, and with the interests of the motion picture industry at heart, the Palmer Photoplay Corporation requests you to try. Who can tell what the reward may be in your case? For your convenience, the coupon is printed on this page. The questionnaire is free, and your request for it incurs no obligation upon you.

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*Screenland*, Markham Bldg., Hollywood, Calif., offers a monthly prize of \$25 for the best letter of comment and criticism of the magazine. The number discussed in the letter must be named. Not more than 200 words are allowed, and contestants should address, "Editor, Your Own Page."

*Screenland* also offers \$2.50 for "Movie Games" acceptable for publication in its Movie Game department.

*The Evening Public Ledger*, Philadelphia, publishes each day a "Limpin' Lim'rick" with the last line missing. A prize of \$100 will be awarded daily to the person submitting the best fifth line.

*The Republic Book Co.*, 157 E. Forty-seventh Street, New York, in a contest closing March 31, 1922, offers \$200 for the best constructive reviews within 1000 words each of the book, "Safety for the Child," by Dorothea H. Scoville, M. D., and Doris Long. The review should suggest an amendment or new idea for the book. Reviews must be submitted under pseudonym, with the author's real name in accompanying envelope.

*The Lutheran*, Ninth and Sansom Streets, Philadelphia, offers \$150 in prizes for stories of Christian service. The contest closes May 1st, and the details may be obtained by addressing the editors.

*The American Economic Association*, Yale Station, New York, offers the "Karelson Economic Prizes" of \$1000, \$500, and \$250 for the best essays on "The Relations of Labor and Capital." The contest closes September 1, 1922. Essays may range from 7500 to 25,000 words. Manuscripts must be signed by a pseudonym and accompanied by a sealed envelope containing pseudonym and real name.

*The Outlook*, 381 Fourth Avenue, New York, announces a prize contest for letters on "What I consider the best advertisement published in *The Outlook* in 1922, and why." The first prize is \$50; second, \$30, and third, \$20.

*Life*, 598 Madison Avenue, New York, pays \$5.00 each for "Life Lines," or clever sayings. It has discontinued its \$100 prize for the best "Life Line" published during the quarterly period.

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contributions under 200 words in length to its weekly department, "Stories to Tell." Others published besides the prize-winners will be paid for at usual rates.

*Contemporary Verse*, Logan P. O., Philadelphia, Charles Wharton Stork, editor, offers its usual prizes for English poetry printed in the magazine during the current year: They are: the special Gene Stratton Porter prize of \$25; five prizes of \$40, and five second prizes of \$20 each. He also offers the Joseph Andrew Galahad Sonnet prize of \$25 for the best Elizabethan sonnet of the year, i. e., the best sonnet written in three quatrains and a couplet.

*The Clark Equipment Company*, Buchanan, Mich., offers \$1000 for the best poem on "The Spirit of Transportation" submitted by July 1st.

*True Confessions*, Robbinsdale, Minn., offers two prizes of \$1000, two of \$300, two of \$200, twenty of \$100, fifty of \$50 and one hundred of \$25 for stories of the confession type between 1000 and 10,000 words in length. Half of the prizes, it is stated, will be awarded June 1st, and half October 1st.

*Alfred E. Ross*, 141 Clifton Street, New Haven, Conn., offers \$50.00 for the best article on hunting and trapping submitted from each state. Photographs for illustration may accompany the article. Contest closes March 31.

*The Hay Rake*, 821 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, pays \$10 each month for the best "short and snappy" story submitted.

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